

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 SAM-01 ACDA-05 IO-10 OMB-01 /074 W

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O R 111809Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6400

SECDEF IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 17330

DEFENSE FOR ISA

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MASS, UI, EG

SUBJ: POLITICAL AND ARMS SALES DISCUSSIONS DURING SADAT
VISIT TO UK

1. ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY WEIR OF FCO BRIEFED US NOV. L1 ON THE SADAT VISIT TO UK. THE BRITISH FEEL THAT THE VISIT WAS A GREAT SUCCESS, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF ITS IMPACT ON SADAT, THAT IT MARKED A TURNING POINT, AND THAT IT SIGNIFIED "BURYING THE HATCHET". HOWEVER, WEIR TERMED THE VISIT "INSUBSTANTIAL" IN TERMS OF SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS. HE EXPRESSED IRRITATION WITH THE BRITISH PRESS WHICH, DESPITE WEIR'S OWN BRIEFING, HAD INSISTED ON PRINTING UNTRUE STORIES ABOUT THE CONCLUSION OF LARGE-SCALE ARMS DEALS.

2. DURING THE POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS, SADAT WAS SCATHING ABOUT THE SYRIANS. SADAT STATED THE SYRIANS HAD COMMITTED THEMSELVES TO NEGOTIATE, BUT THAT ASSAD HAD GONE BACK ON HIS WORD, CLAIMING THAT HE HAD BEEN ILL-INFORMED ABOUT
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THE SINAI II AGREEMENT. THE EGYPTIANS EXPLAINED THAT

FAHMI HAD MADE A PUBLIC STATEMENT ABOUT AN IMPENDING VISIT BETWEEN PRESIDENT FORD AND ASSAD IN ORDER TO SHOW THE SYRIANS UP, AND THE DISCLOSURE MADE THE LATTER FURIOUS. WEIR SAID HE WAS PUZZLED BY THE RATIONALE GIVEN IN THIS EGYPTIAN ACCOUNT. SADAT REITERATED THAT THE EGYPTIANS ARE NOW WORKING TO GET ASSAD OUT OF THE HOLE HE DUG FOR HIMSELF.

3. TURNING TO LIBYA, SADAT TOLD THE BRITISH THAT HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT SOVIET DELIVERIES OF SUBMARINES AND FOXBAT AIRCRAFT TO THE LIBYANS. SADAT NOTED THAT WHEN FOUR FOXBATS HAD BEEN STATIONED IN EGYPT, THE SOVIETS HAD NEVER LET THE EGYPTIAN PILOTS NEAR THEM. WITH REGARD TO THE LEBANESE SITUATION, THE EGYPTIANS WERE QUITE CLEAR THAT THEY BELIEVE OUTSIDERS SHOULD KEEP THEIR HANDS OFF. (PARENTHETICALLY, WEIR NOTED THAT THE BRITISH DO NOT THINK THE FRENCH ARE IN A GOOD POSITION TO UNDERTAKE AN INTERMEDIARY INITIATIVE AND BELIEVE THAT THE PAPAL MISSION IS BEING BETTER RECEIVED.) SADAT CRITICIZED THE SYRIAN ROLE IN THE LEBANESE CRISIS, ALLEGING THAT THE SYRIAN-BACKED PALESTINIAN GROUPS HAD DONE A GOOD DEAL OF SHOOTING.

4. WEIR CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS THAT SADAT HAD STATED THAT HE WOULD WELCOME BRITISH AND FRENCH PARTICIPATION AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, ON THE BASIS THAT THE MORE PARTIES PROVIDING GUARANTEES, THE BETTER. WEIR STATED THE BRITISH REPLIED THEY ARE NOT PUSHING THEMSELVES FORWARD IN THIS RESPECT, BUT THAT IF AT ANY TIME THEY CAN PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE AND ALL PARTIES WANT THEM TO DO SO, THEY WOULD; HOWEVER, AT PRESENT THE ISRAELIS DO NOT WANT THEM TO.

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DEFENSE FOR ISAA

5. IN A DISCUSSION WITH REGINALD ANDERSON (ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY FOR SALES/MOD), EMBOFFS NOTED THE FOLLOWING POINTS HE MADE:

(A) THE DISCUSSIONS ON THE JAGUAR AIRCRAFT WERE "GENERAL" ON MATTERS OF BROAD PRINCIPLE AND LARGELY HYPOTHETICAL;

(B) THE EGYPTIANS SHOWED GREAT INTEREST IN THE JAGUAR AIRCRAFT AND INDICATED A PREFERENCE FOR THE BRITISH VERSION OVER THE FRENCH;

(C) THEY WOULD PREFER A CO-PRODUCTION PROGRAM INVOLVING A 20/80 PERCENT SPLIT WITH THE 80 PERCENT COMING OFF THE ANGLO-FRENCH SHELF;

(D) THE FRENCH WERE "SELLING HARD" THE F-1 AND WERE UNLIKELY TO GIVE THE JAGUAR ANY SUPPORT UNLESS IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE EGYPTIANS WOULD NOT BUY THE F-1.

6. IT WAS CLEAR TO EMBOFFS THAT THE MOD HAD RECOMMENDED TO SECRETARY MASON THAT HE SEEK CABINET AUTHORITY TO PROCEED WITH FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE POSSIBLE SALE OF THE JAGUAR. IT WAS ALSO CLEAR THAT ANDERSON CONSIDERED
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THE PM'S "STRONG PRO-ISRAELI" LEANINGS POSSIBLE OBSTACLE TO AN EARLY LIFTING OF HMG'S EMBARGO ON THE SALE OF "SOPHISTICATED" AIRCRAFT TO EGYPT. ANDERSON EMPHASIZED STRONGLY THAT THE REPORTS IN THE PRESS "GREATLY EXAGGERATED" THE IMMEDIATE LIKELIHOOD OF A JAGUAR DEAL, AS WELL AS ITS SIZE.

7. ANDERSON REMINDED EMBOFFS THAT THE EGYPTIANS HAD BROUGHT UP ONCE AGAIN THE MATTER OF THE MK-44 TORPEDO. HE SAID THAT SADAT HAD TOLD THEM THAT "THE PRESIDENT" HAD ASSURED THEM OF USG RELEASE (SEE LONDON 11848). ANDERSON SAID THAT THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON IS TAKING THIS MATTER UP DIRECTLY.

8. FINALLY, ANDERSON MADE THE POINT THAT WITHIN THE TOTAL ARMS PACKAGE DISCUSSED WITH SADAT, THE EGYPTIANS INDICATED THEIR DEFINITE PREFERENCE FOR DEALING WITH THE BRITISH TO SATISFY THEIR NAVAL EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS. ALTHOUGH ANDERSON REFUSED TO DISCLOSE DETAILS, HE INTIMATED THAT THE VALUE OF THE NAVAL PACKAGE -- WHICH WOULD INCLUDE NAVAL PATROL BOATS -- WOULD BE VERY SUBSTANTIAL. RICHARDSON

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